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Request for the inclusion of an additional sub-item in the agenda of the fifty-ninth session

Election of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Note by the Secretary-General

1. By its decision 55/310 of 26 October 2000, the General Assembly, on the proposal of the Secretary-General (A/55/519), elected Ruud Lubbers as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 2001.

2. By its resolution 57/186 of 18 December 2002, the General Assembly decided to continue the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for a further period of five years from 1 January 2004.

3. By its decision 58/402 of 6 October 2003, the General Assembly, on the proposal of the Secretary-General (A/58/396), extended the term of office of Ruud Lubbers as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for a period of two years beginning on 1 January 2004.

4. Mr. Lubbers resigned on 20 February 2005. Wendy Chamberlin, Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, has been serving as Acting High Commissioner until a successor is elected.

5. In conformity with paragraph 13 of the statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Secretary-General proposes to the General Assembly that it elect Antônio Manuel de Oliveira Guterres (Portugal) as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for a period of three years beginning on 15 June 2005 and ending on 14 June 2008.

6. In the light of the above, the Secretary-General has the honour to request, pursuant to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-ninth session of an additional sub-item entitled "Election of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees", under agenda item 16, entitled "Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections".

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